

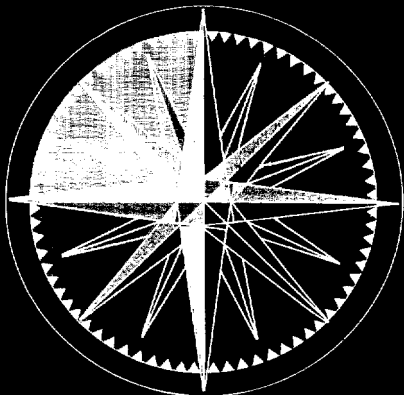
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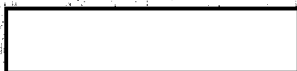
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SPECIAL REPORT

SOVIET ATTITUDE TOWARD FOREIGN COMMUNIST PARTIES

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE



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SOVIET ATTITUDE TOWARD FOREIGN COMMUNIST PARTIES

Moscow has begun advising Communist parties outside the bloc to break out of their isolation and widen their contacts with non-Communist groups in an effort to secure a broader popular base. This action reflects a growing awareness that parties which appear to be the mere instruments of a foreign power have little chance of gaining respectability in their own countries and may actually hamper the advancement of broad Soviet foreign policy interests. In recent months, articles in Pravda, the World Marxist Review, and other Communist journals have been taking the line that "non-capitalistic development" can be accomplished under the leadership "of a single national democratic front, whose social and economic policy is directed at the liquidation of imperialist exploitation and precapitalist relationships...."

The political success of the Social-Democratic parties in Western Europe and in Scandinavia has confronted the Western Communist parties, and the USSR, with a serious problem. Already, there have been enough defections to non-Communist parties to justify Moscow's apprehensions. The Soviet leaders, in consequence, have urged upon their Western comrades the necessity of closer cooperation with the Social-Democrats as the only realistic alternative to political oblivion. Moscow recognizes that for many parties the transformation of their domestic political image will take time, but has made it clear to Communist delegations that there is no other feasible option.

In the Arab world, in contrast to Western Europe, the Communists appear to have been quite aggressive in their efforts to break out of their political shell and have probably profited by Moscow's heavy economic and military aid commitments in some influential countries. In addition, the hazards of political isolation--both to the party involved and to Soviet state interests--had been forcefully brought home by the Iraqi Baathists' violent repression of the Communists in July 1963.

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Moscow's Aim

Moscow's immediate aim, therefore, was to encourage the Arab Communists to foster ties with other political groups as a protection device. The intention was also, however, to counteract Chinese proselytizing activity among the Arab parties.

Moscow has charged that the Chinese sought to exploit the persecution of the Iraqi Communist Party in order to form a pro-Chinese splinter group which would become "a substitute for the party" and which would drive "a wedge between the Iraqi and Soviet Communists." In the case of Syria and Lebanon, it appears that a policy of sterile opposition had so ossified these parties that they had become susceptible to splintering by the Chinese on the basis of appeals to revolutionary activity.

The need to focus on these problems, all of which involved a new direction in Soviet attitude toward foreign Communist parties, was highlighted in a number of meetings held by Arab Communists in 1964. The outcome of these meetings was a statement issued in December proposing "the unity of all progressive national forces." The statement asserted that "there can be only one kind of socialism, namely scientific socialism," but recognized that it is necessary to consider the "new realities of the Arab world." These new realities led the participants to propose "the establishment of the strongest possible ties of cooperation among the progressive parties, organ-

izations, and movements in the Arab world and the exertion of joint efforts...in every Arab country."

To further this proposal, Soviet commentators have ignored Khrushchev's tactless statement in Egypt in May 1964 that unity must be sought on a class rather than on an ethnic basis and have encouraged Arab unity in an anti-imperialist front. A public lecturer in Moscow, for instance, asserted in October that the "socialist" approach to unity concentrates at present on unity of action against the imperialists and colonialists.

Algeria

The program Moscow has sought to encourage was described by Syrian Communist leader Bakdash in the World Marxist Review of August 1964:

"Developments in Algeria indicate that it is possible to begin the transition to the noncapitalist road leading to socialism now by way of establishing a popular national power based on a broad front that may even take the form of one party consisting of members of different sections of the population favoring socialism."

Efforts to achieve this broad front had begun much earlier. After the rebellion, as Ben Bella consolidated his hold on the political machinery of the government and particularly after the economic and social reforms of March 1963, Moscow

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began to seek closer relations with Algeria.

In September 1963 Moscow announced a long-term \$100-million credit to Algeria, and during the autumn border fighting with Morocco it extended open propaganda support and military aid to Algeria. During this period the USSR also began to show a more favorable public attitude toward Ben Bella's internal policies. Pravda on 3 December noted that Algeria had established socialism as its goal, asserted that the "Algerian Communists are showing active support for the Ben Bella government," and urged the establishment of unity among "all genuinely revolutionary patriotic forces."

The position of the Communists had long been ambiguous in Algeria. The party had refused to accept the terms of the National Liberation Front (FLN) for cooperation during the rebellion, and consequently could claim little share in the victory. Following its proscription in November 1962, the party appears to have sought to establish a common front with the FLN, but tenuous evidence suggests that the terms of cooperation continued to be an issue through 1964. The Communists reportedly suffered a setback at the April 1964 FLN congress.

Ben Bella's visit to the USSR the next month was marked by highly laudatory references to Algeria and to "Comrade" Ben Bella, but parts of both Khrushchev's 5 May speech and the

7 May communiqué seemed to be exhorting the Ben Bella government to bring the Communists into the political structure of the country. An article in the January 1965 World Marxist Review by Algerian Communist Leader Bachir Hadj Ali also appeared to be seeking to establish his followers' loyalty to the regime and their claim to equality with other forces in Algeria, including the FLN and the National Liberation Army.

Despite the adoption of these tactics by the Communists and Moscow's favorable treatment of the regime, there appears to remain at least a degree of caution concerning the government's policies. In a recent article on Algeria in World Economic and International Relations, Bachir Hadj Ali is quoted as noting that the regime had opted for socialism without accepting all the philosophical positions of Marxism-Leninism. "Despite this," he continued, "the economic, social, and political conditions for the building of socialism are being created," implying that a group with a firmer grasp of scientific socialism will have to be established to undertake the actual construction of socialism.

In this same article, the author admitted that the progress of revolutionary reorganization will be slow because of the need to create a new psychology and a new, socialist consciousness. The problem of the Algerian population's strong ties with the Muslim religion was identified as one in particular which could

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be dealt with only at a very cautious pace. Finally, the article called for the implementation of the FLN's resolution concerning the strengthening of "the unity of the progressive forces," suggesting that the role of the Communists in Algeria remains an issue of muted dispute between Moscow and Algiers.

While maintaining a cautious approach toward the ideological orientation of the Algerian Government, Moscow has portrayed developments in that country as a model for underdeveloped countries. In recent years Soviet propaganda has sought to encourage the development of these countries "along the noncapitalist path." Algerian nationalizations and self-management committees have been represented by Soviet spokesmen as correct examples of the means to this end.

In treating favorably the changes that had taken place in Algeria, Kommunist in October 1964 noted that they merely opened up before the country "the perspectives of socialism," and that Algeria is "only beginning to solve the problem" of the construction of socialism. The USSR's continued encouragement of these changes is probably best reflected in the May Day and October Revolution slogans. Beginning with the 1964 May Day slogans, Moscow has stated that Algeria is building a "people's democratic state." The latest May Day slogans have added that the people of Algeria are struggling for "the socialist development of their coun-

try," a statement which sets Algeria off from all nonbloc states except Egypt.

Egypt

Egypt's Communists have recently announced that their party has been dissolved. Members now can legally enter Nasir's ruling party, the Arab Socialist Union, with the goal of ultimately controlling it. Their dissolution of the formal party structure, as well as the exceptional treatment accorded Egypt in the latest May Day slogans, probably reflects Moscow's favorable evaluation of such events as the release of many imprisoned Egyptian Communists in the spring of 1964 and the subsequent appearance of a number of Communists in influential positions in the Egyptian press.

In view of Nasir's deep suspicion of local Communists, however, it is unlikely that they will be allowed to occupy important positions in the Arab Socialist Union or in the state structure. Nevertheless, Moscow is clearly trying to create a psychological climate which will influence Nasir toward policies more favorable to Soviet interests.

Syria

Pravda has hailed Syria's recent nationalization of a number of private concerns and industries as "profound progressive transformations" recognized in Syria as expanding the possibilities for movement "along

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the noncapitalist path of development."

It is doubtful that either the USSR or Syrian Communist leader Bakdash is any more confident than heretofore that Syria has embarked on a program leading to "scientific socialism." Since January, however, the Communists have abandoned their overtures to the antiregime wing of the Baath party and sought participation in the Hafiz government on the basis of their support for nationalization.

Outlook Over the Near Term

Under the present Communist program, unity in the Arab world as a whole is to be achieved in an "anti-imperialist" front; national unity is to be attained through cooperation in "noncapitalist development." Yet, as Bakdash's statement on Algeria suggests, nationalization decrees have merely been seized upon as a means by which the Middle Eastern parties may break out of their isolation.

An article in the World Marxist Review in December 1964 stated that the Iraqi Communists no longer looked to the establishment of a popular regime "under the leadership of the working class," but are "revising their methods of struggle for political alliances, on the basis of the possibility of non-capitalist development.

Lacking decisive influence by operating alone, the Middle Eastern Communists are seeking to enhance their position and enter into the mainstream of political development by abandoning such slogans as the dictatorship of the proletariat and by cooperating with other parties. Considering the ineffectiveness of

Middle Eastern Communist parties in recent years, this tactic will almost certainly enhance their position. This policy, however, is not without risks to the various parties.

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Although efforts to promote national fronts predate the new Soviet leadership, it is clear that decisions to infuse new vigor into this program were taken shortly after the fall of Khrushchev. Moscow has sought to assert its influence in the Middle Eastern parties to offset Chinese activities and erode the Western position in the Arab world. As part of a series of foreign policy maneuvers in recent months against Western interests, the USSR has demonstrated that it intends to assert itself in the "third world." In pursuing this policy the Soviet leaders hope to revitalize the long-moribund instrument of Middle Eastern Communism.

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